Bypaths of Kansas History

COUNCIL GROVE AND THE KAW INDIANS IN 1849

FROM THE NEW-YORK WEEKLY TRIBUNE, JULY 21, 1849.

THE EMIGRANTS BY THE SANTA FE ROUTE.

FROM THE CINCINNATI DISPATCH.

COUNCIL GROVE, 127 MILES FROM FORT LEAVENWORTH THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 1849.

Here we are, all safely arrived at one of the principal stopping places on the Santa Fe route. This is where the Government has a blacksmith shop, to do such work in that line of business as the Kansas or Kaw Indians need, and from where the same tribe receive their annual allowance from the U. S. Government of $8,000. They number about 1,500 in all, and have about 800 warriors. They have had a war dance here very late, and after a deliberate council, they resolved on having revenge on the Pawnee tribe, who, during the buffalo hunting season of 1848, killed seven of the Kaws, who immediately imprisoned a corresponding number, and were about to wreak out their blood-thirsty revenge on the seven, but our Government interfered and caused a release of the seven Pawnees. They have now determined to be satisfied, and have no interference from any human power. The Kaws have just left their village (115 miles from here,) to go and hunt the buffalo. We saw yesterday, for the first time, the genuine savage as he roams the wilds, with moccasins, leggings, girdle, blanket, tomahawk and scalping-knife, and the never-to-be-released pipe. They say here there are no Indians who do not smoke their kinmonicick or sumac leaves, and seed mixed with a very small quantity of tobacco.

The Kaws, who are lying lazily about here, have the peculiarity of having their hair shaved in such a manner as to leave a triangular tuft, the apex of the triangle on the top of the brow, spreading regularly back, the base resting on the neck; the side edges stand up, and the central hair is plaited in such a manner as to form a long queue; their ears are gashed, and filled with rings; brass rings around their arms. Every one now has to be on the alert to prevent loss of mules, horses, &c.; in fact anything they can lay hands on. We all have to carry our side arms, and be on guard during the night. From the spirit of the emigrants, it is not to be wondered at that the Indians are hostile and treacherous. It is perfectly outrageous to see how the poor Indians’ fences, chickens, pigs, sheep, corn, potatoes, onions, &c. are stripped from them without even saying, “by your leave, if you please;” and as for paying for them, they never expect to do that if they can see the thing and get it; but if out of sight, and they have to inquire for the same, money then becomes the vehicle on which the desired object comes.

We are fully under headway. Since the death of Gen. Worth, Gen. Brooke has been ordered elsewhere, and the entire military control of the dragoons is now in the hands of Capt. Kerr. We now make, on an average, 25 miles daily.

When in camp most of the messes eat three meals a day; while traveling only two. Our mess do most admirably; we have the lightest wagon, a well-
filled load, 1,700 pounds, and the best looking and strongest mules in the entire train. The Government wagons are very heavy, require six mules each, and carry 30 to 35 cwt, and stall nearly every day, which has not happened to us as yet.

Our present sanguine expectation is that 35 days' travel with pack mules from Santa Fe will take us all to San Francisco. All persons familiar with the South Pass route (the one taken by Dr. Levering's Company) anticipate that those who have gone that way will suffer greatly from the want of grass, which, giving out, as it is bound to do, the mules, and especially oxen, will die by thousands, and the men cannot carry enough to support themselves, and that they would get no further than the mountains ere Winter, where they are bound to freeze to death.

They say that no more than 5,000 animals can cross that way and live, and from 15,000 to 20,000 head of cattle are now on it. We are, and have been, for several days on the 'Great American Plains,' gently rolling far as the eye can comprehend, and here and there a thin streak of small timber on the bank of a little rivulet presenting very much the appearance of hedges including vast parks, most beautifully interspersed with Prairie Pinks, Roses, Verbena, Morning Glories, Sensitive Plants, Strawberries, and ripe Gooseberries, Plums, and fifty varieties of flowers I know nothing about, but all in most lavish profusion. The streams have no sand as a general rule, black earthy bottom, filled with brush, leaves, &c. timber mostly elm, oak, and sycamore.

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**FAIR AND FRANK**

Advertisement in *The Kansas Herald of Freedom*, Lawrence, March 14, 1857.

Law Office.—The undersigned (egregiously and presumptuously, without the consent of any speculator, office-seeker or fanatical politician, of any sect or party whatever) has concluded to practice law under the bogus statutes, by opening a law office in Lawrence, two doors south of the Post Office. All persons entrusting him pertaining to the legal profession can safely rely on his futility of purpose and imbecility of intellect.

W. M. Patterson.

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**SOCIETY NOTE FROM ALMA**

From the *Wabaunsee County Herald*, Alma, July 15, 1869.

We have about twenty bachelors in this town. It is a shame, when there are so many good looking young ladies about.

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**WHEN ELLSWORTH CATERED TO THE TEXAS TRADE**

The following excerpt is from a four-column article on Ellsworth, probably written by Col. S. S. Prouty, featured in *The Kansas Daily Commonwealth* of Topeka, July 1, 1873.
One of the most flourishing and best patronized institutions in Ellsworth is the Ellsworth Theatre, which is "open every night" for the amusement and delectation of the Ellsworth sovereigns and the temporary sojourners from the land of Sam Houston. The following programme of a recent performance at this establishment will give the uninitiated some idea of its character:

**ELLSWORTH THEATRE!**

McClellan, Freeman & Co., . . . Proprietors.  
Ned Campbell, . . Business and Stage Manager.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admission</th>
<th>$ 50</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seats in Private Box</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**THE POPULAR RESORT.**

**OUR ATTENDANCE INCREASING NIGHTLY!**

The reason why is obvious. We produce nothing old and stale, but every act is a gem, and our talent is the most versatile in the west.

**TO-NIGHT, JUNE 25, EVERYTHING NEW!**

*Examine the Programme Carefully!*

**FIRST PART:**

Overture ..................Orchestra.  
The Wicklow Girl .............Dan Hart.  
Little Maud ................Miss Hallie Norcross.  
Ka-mo-ki ma................Harry Traynor.  
Kiss me good bye.............Ned Campbell.  
Finale ........................Company.

**OVERTURE . ORCHESTRA.**

Mr. Charles Vincent, in his old man specialty  
**50 YEARS AGO.**

Popular Songs  . MISS HALLIE NORCROSS.

**SHAKESPEARE DISLOCATED.**

Dramatic Author ...............Ned Campbell.  
Amateur Jake ..................Harry Traynor.

Overture ..................Orchestra.  
La Zingarella ................Miss Amelia Dean.  
Lively Feet ..................Charles Kelley.
The People's Lawyer.
Lawyer Sheepface ...........Mr. Charles Vincent.
Judge Mutton ..................Ned Campbell.
Old Snarl ..................Dan Hart.
Sarah Jane Wool............Harry Traynor.
Policeman Fivestars .........Charles Kelley.

Dance of the Thistle, Miss H. Norcross.

Plantation Pastimes.
Mr. Charles Vincent and Miss Amelia Dean.

Go and imbibe with "Mac" while the Band Plays.

After which the screaming farce entitled the

BROWN FAMILY!
Mr. Brown ..................Ned Campbell.
Mrs. Brown ..................Miss Amelia Dean.
Jake ..................Dan Hart.

General Admission, 50 cents; seats in private boxes, $1; admission to wine room, $1. The bar will be stocked with the choicest ales, wines, liquors. Any inattention or overcharge on the part of ushers or waiters should be immediately reported to the proprietor.

Reader, did you ever visit a frontier theatre? If not, wrap yourself in your "mantle of imagination," for a brief season and follow us. Picture to yourself a low one-story wooden structure, about seventy-five feet in length and twenty in width. We approach about the time of 9 P. M., and are enticed there by the musical strains of the orchestra, consisting of a violin, violoncello, guitar and cornet. What the music lacks in harmony it certainly compensates in volume and spirit. The room is unplastered and no sign of paint is visible save that on the proscenium and drop curtain. The stage is at the end opposite to the entrance, and the "green room" is in the rear of the stage. Plain pine benches, with a seating capacity of one hundred and fifty, are in the auditorium. At the right of the entrance is a bar for dispensation of cholera medicine, and at the left is a monte table. At the left of the stage is the "private box," which consists of a kind of protuberance out of doors like an old-fashioned bake oven, with a seating capacity of about a dozen. The occupants of the "private box" are mostly "ladies," though a long-haired gallant from the sunny land of the south may frequently be seen sandwiched between the gayly decorated and dashing "ladies." The drop curtain of the stage is ornamental as well as suggestive. A gay and chivalric cattle herder, dressed in the style of a Spanish don, with a crimson jacket trimmed with gold lace and a huge plume flowing from his grand Castilian sombrero, with ponderous spurs protruding from his boots, is mounted on a furious and awe-inspiring
horse. A fiery untamed member of the long-horned species has just been lassoed by the valorous herder, and is making desperate efforts to get released, but the herder is invincible and holds to the lasso with toper-like tenacity. Between the herder and his victim is a mammoth lone star, illuminated with golden and silver colors. To the valiant Texan, upon whose patronage the proprietors of the theatre mainly rely, the scene is sublime and inspiring. 

As we enter the curtain rises and the “trouble” begins. About fifty patrons, mostly young men, are in attendance. Seven or eight “ladies” and three or four “gentlemen” are in the bake oven or “private box.” Boys, with waiters in their hands, are circulating about, crying, “Liquors and cigars.” Incense from numerous burning Indian weeds is ascending and mingling its fragrance with that from the exudations of the sweltering cattle herders and the extravagant perfumery of the cyprians. “Mac” at the bar, while mixing and shaking drinks, keeps time with the orchestral music and the jig dancer of the stage. The herders guffaw, the “ladies” giggle, the monte players curse, orders for cigars and drinks are unceasing, and the singing, dancing and theatrical performance progress. One of the gentlemanly proprietors invites us into the “green room,” to partake of a bottle of Imperial. We accept and enter this sacred realm. Here are a score of herders drinking wine and indulging in familiar pleasantries with the stage girls. It is the acme of a herder’s ambition to obtain accession to the “green room” and crack a bottle of wine with the girls. These visits to the “green room” frequently cost a dozen head of steers, but Texas is able to stand the damage and don’t care for the expense. 

AN INDIAN BALL GAME

From the Junction City Union, August 9, 1879.

A game of ball was played between a band of Sacs and Foxes, of Osage county, and a band of Pottawatomies, on the Prairie Band reserve, last Wednesday, with 150 on a side. A game of Indian ball is one of the most exciting imaginable, requiring sometimes five or six hours to determine a game. There is nothing like it among white people. The players strip to the skin, reserving nothing but breechclouts, and each has a scoop, made of twigs, with which the ball is caught and thrown.

A WEEK IN MANHATTAN

From The Nationalist, Manhattan, August 22, 1879.

How our town does begin to city, to be sure. We have had a pretty lively week of it. Sunday, we had an accident; horse became unmanageable, and child badly hurt. Monday, three arrests were made: a woman of doubtful character, and a St. Louis runner; C. B. Donaldson, for selling liquor. Tuesday, the trial of the “innocents abroad,” and happy exultation over the result; a street row and fist fight, with still happier exultation over the results; evening, devoted to hilarity. Wednesday, devoted to recovering from the same, and reconciliations; evening closing in with a small runaway, only one woman and child thrown out and hurt. Thursday, a wedding party. The contracting
parties were a gentleman from Illinois, upon whose head the suns of seventy
summers had laid their garlands lightly. The lady is a resident here, and of
suitable age to insure the happiness of all. They departed on the wedding
trip on the noon train, and the future will doubtless pass like a blissful dream.
No arrests.

And so with a Sabbath school picnic, a two days' hunt, a dog fight or two,
with temperate libations of "eelsior water," the week has been worried through.

OLD STUFF TO THE STATE FISH AND GAME WARDEN

From the correspondence files of Gov. W. R. StuBbs, in the Ar-
chives division of the Kansas State Historical Society.

OCTOBER 25, 1912.

Prof. L. L. Dyche,
Pratt, Kansas.

My Dear Professor:—

It was reported to this office this afternoon that one of your Fish & Game
Deputy Wardens at Auburn whose name I understood was Mattet, has been
acting very curiously and some people think he is insane. I do not know
anything about it myself but a garage man telephoned me awhile ago, saying
that he has gone completely 'daffy'; that he had two or three guns, a few re-
volvers, bowie-knives and other things, which he was flourishing around near
Auburn today. He thought that he might imagine somebody was violating
the game law and go out and do a lot of killing especially among boys. I think
it would be well for you to look into this right away. . . .

Yours very truly,

[DAVID D. LEAHY]
Secretary to the Governor.

PRATT, KAN., OCTOBER 28, 1912.

Mr. David D. Leahy,
U/O Governor's Office,
Topeka, Kansas.

My Dear David:

Your favor of October 25th duly received. I think I have a Deputy Warden
in the neighborhood of Auburn of the name of Mabitt. You say he has been
acting curious and people think he is insane. . . . I receive letters nearly
every day indicating to me that Deputy Wardens are all crazy. Little things
like that do not disturb me but when a warden actually goes insane and be-
comes completely "daffy" he should be cared for by the proper officers and
not allowed to run up and down the streets shooting the lightning rods off of
the chimneys and throwing bowie knives through attic windows, for such
actions are very unbecoming, even for a Deputy Fish and Game Warden. . . .

Very truly yours,

[Signed] L. L. Dyche
State Fish & Game Warden.